

Alumni News

Family Connections

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **We meet every Tuesday from 6:30 to 8:30**
- **It's a potluck, so come hungry**
- **We rotate between tweaking contracts, talking about pressing issues and just having some fun playing a family game**
- **We always leave with a smile**
- **If you have any questions please call Sandy Wallace at 703-737-8649**

We ask two questions mid way through the Parenting with Love and Limits group. "How are we doing" and "What would you change about the group?" Nine out of ten responses have always been "make the group longer." Instead of two hours once a week, make it 2 1/2 or 3 hours or an 8th and 9th class added on to the original 7.

After much brainstorming we've come up with a solution. We've always encouraged everyone to join us in the Alumni group on Tuesdays nights. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet additional parents in the same situation. When a new problem arises (and they always do) it gives you a place where people will listen without judging and will offer ad-

vice based on experience, not just "how they would do it". It's also a great place to have a good meal and share a few laughs.

Now we are offering workshops. After a shared meal with everyone we break off into a separate group to continue building your family agreement. It's a smaller group with up to three families so you still get the input that is so important but it's in a more intimate setting.

Again we encourage everyone to come to the Alumni group and now you will have two options to choose from. Always come for a good meal then decide if you want to continue working on your fam-



ily agreement or stay in the larger group where a more general discussion is always going on. You decide.

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FAMILY CONNECTIONS ON THE WEB

Family Connections can now be found on the Loudoun County Webpage. Just go to www.loudoun.gov, under Search type in Family Connections. There you will find information describing our program along with a place to

register. Your information will automatically be forwarded to John or Lauren who will then give you a call to see if the program is a good fit for you and your teen. This is a wonderful way to get the information out there, so if you know

of anyone who you think might benefit from taking Parenting with Love and Limits send them to the Web.

IN MY GARDEN

I wandered through my garden
on a lovely summers day
gazing at the beauty
of the flowers in full array.
The snapdragon so colorful
the poppy red and bold
I reached to touch the sunflower
with her petals of yellow gold.
In the garden I saw the lily,
so white and ever pure
the marigold so hardy
and the petunias galore.
Yet by the garden wall
there stood, my lovely violet rose
her beauty more magnificent
than any that I chose.
Her colors were so delicate
her scent a pure delight
I never saw the thorns she bore
too late, I felt the bite.
I jumped back for a moment
I couldn't understand why
a flower so soft and lovely
could hurt, and make me cry.

But still her beauty captured me
and once again I tried,
but this time I was careful
not to touch the bitter side.
In the garden of the children
there are beauties everywhere
the delicate and pretty
and the ones with charm so rare.
There are those who will grow stronger
in the pleasant summer sun
there are some that fade and wither
despite love from everyone.
But the rarest of the children
are the ones who bear the thorn
the children who will struggle
from the day that they are born
But they also bear the beauty
of the soft and gentle rose
their scent is of most bittersweet
and this is the child, I chose
And reaching out to touch him
I felt his prickle there
but once again I stretched my hand
and found the beauty there
In the garden of the children

where they grow so wild and free,
I picked the one who has a price
and found the one for me.

Sally Meyer



*If we had not winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity,
prosperity would not be so welcome
Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672)*



AN INVITATION FROM LAUREN

Thanks to some great input from our teens, we have now begun to run our teen alumni group a little differently. Some of our older teens were getting annoyed sitting in a group and talking about issues that didn't really apply to them anymore, so for the past few weeks, we have had an "older" or a "transitioning" group. The teens in the group

are older and have backed off from most of the button pushing at home.

Topics vary. Everything from dating to probation to relationships and our families, as well as everything in between. It's always pretty laid back and even kind of fun! The older teens have even talked about having a night where

they share some of their wisdom with the younger teens.

So far, the group seems to be a success! If you feel like you want to give the group a try, stop by any Tuesday night from 6:30 to 8:30 and check it out. We'd love to have you!